



THE CHILDREN'S TRUST



Early Learning Career Center

# Thrive by 5 Quality Improvement System Workforce Study 2024

# Thrive by 5 Supports Early Childhood Programs and Educators

Children’s early learning experiences are critical in preparing them for success in school and life.<sup>1</sup> Competent, engaged, and responsive early childhood educators play a pivotal role in the impact of those early learning experiences.<sup>2</sup>

The Thrive by 5 Early Learning Quality Improvement System (QIS) promotes children’s school readiness through a continuum of supports for early learning programs, educators, and the children they serve. The full complement of Thrive by 5 services are available to programs participating in the QIS with a focus on programs located in low-income neighborhoods.

Thrive by 5 professional development supports and salary incentives, designed to enhance educator skills and compensation, are unique in that educators employed at all early learning programs in Miami-Dade may use them regardless of their program’s participation in the QIS.<sup>3</sup> The following supports are available to over 1,500 programs:

- Career Advising
- Educator Scholarships
- A\$CEND (salary supports)

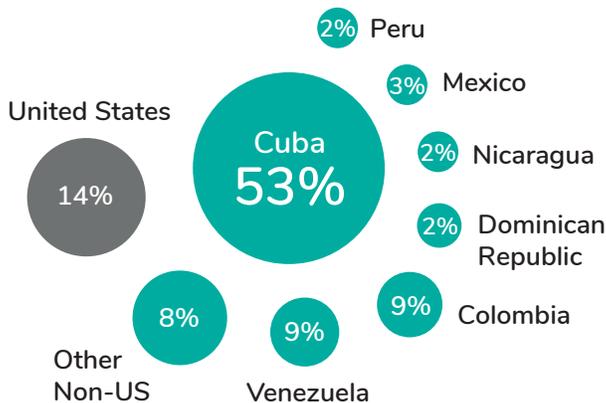
In 2024, 3,355 educators participated in Thrive by 5 through employment at a program participating in the QIS and/or receiving professional development supports.<sup>4</sup> This workforce is referred to as “Thrive by 5 educators” throughout this report. Thrive by 5 supports a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce of early childhood educators which mirrors the communities served.



## Diverse Workforce

**86%**

are born outside of the United States.



**84%**

speak a primary language other than English.

**1%** Creole or Other

**17%**  
English

**83%**  
Spanish



The average Thrive by 5 educator is a 49-year-old Hispanic female holding an early childhood credential with 6 years of experience and working for \$14.00 an hour.

**36%**

speak more than one language.

**\$29,120**

is the median annual salary of a Thrive by 5 educator.

# Services and Outcomes

Preparing children for school, especially those from challenged neighborhoods, depends on having a highly qualified, stable, and well compensated early learning workforce. Thrive by 5's success comes in part from its focus on developing the education, classroom practices, compensation, and bilingual skills of the workforce and concentrating funds in communities with the greatest needs.

Thrive by 5 educators take advantage of available professional supports to improve their education levels and classroom practices. Correlational analyses show that holding a degree and using Thrive by 5 professional development scholarships and salary supports are related to educators' CLASS® Scores.<sup>5</sup>

**84%** accepted PD supports since QIS entry.

**78%** earned an early childhood credential since QIS entry.<sup>6</sup>

Higher educational attainment and developing bilingual skills helps educators significantly improve their salaries.<sup>7</sup>

**\$4.54**  
more per hour

Contributing Factors:

- Holds Degree (+\$1.05)
- Holds Credential (+\$1.57)
- English Fluent (+\$1.92)

Early childhood educators who earn a **degree** and a **credential**, and learn to speak **English fluently** can increase their annual salaries by

**\$9,443**  
on average.



# With Thrive by 5, Educators Succeed and Children benefit...

*Thrive by 5 enhances the education, compensation, and teacher-child interactions of early childhood educators by cultivating and sustaining a competent, bilingual workforce.*



## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Campbell, F., Conti, G., Heckman, J. J., Moon, S. H., Pinto, R., Pungello, E., et al. (2014). Early childhood investments substantially boost adult health. *Science*, 343 (6178), 1478–1485. <https://doi.org/10.1126/1248429>

<sup>1</sup>McCoy, D. C., Yoshikawa, H., Ziol-Guest, K. M., Duncan, G. J., Schindler, H. S., Magnuson, K., Shonkoff, J. P. (2017). Impacts of Early Childhood Education on Medium-and Long-Term Educational Outcomes. *Educational Researcher*, 46 (8), 474–487.

<sup>2</sup>IOM (Institute of Medicine) and NRC (National Research Council). 2015. *Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

<sup>3</sup>Professional development supports are available to eligible educators employed at programs maintained by the Department of Children and Families as well as public school and Head Start early learning programs. These supports represent a subset of Thrive by 5 services. For information on all Thrive by 5 services: <https://www.thechildrenstrust.org/content/thrive-5-0>.

<sup>4</sup>Educators included in this report are those whose programs participated in the Thrive by 5 QIS as of August 2024 and/or who accepted an educator scholarship or salary incentive funded by The Children's Trust over the prior two years.

<sup>5</sup>Based on correlational analyses using available Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS) Tool data for QIS participants as of August 2024 (N = 474).

<sup>6</sup>Percentage of educators earning a Florida Department of Children and Families issued early childhood Staff Credential computed as: Teaching staff who obtained a credential during their time in the QIS out of all teaching staff with multiple data points who did not hold a credential at QIS entry (N = 726/935).

<sup>7</sup>Based on Multiple Regression analyses predicting hourly wage from: Language (Self-reported English Primary or Secondary Fluent Language or Not), and Education level (Holding/Not Holding an early childhood credential and Holding/Not Holding a degree at any level). Average cumulative hourly wage increase of \$4.54 was computed by adding the unstandardized Betas (representing average hourly wage increase per factor controlling for other factors in the model) in the regression model.